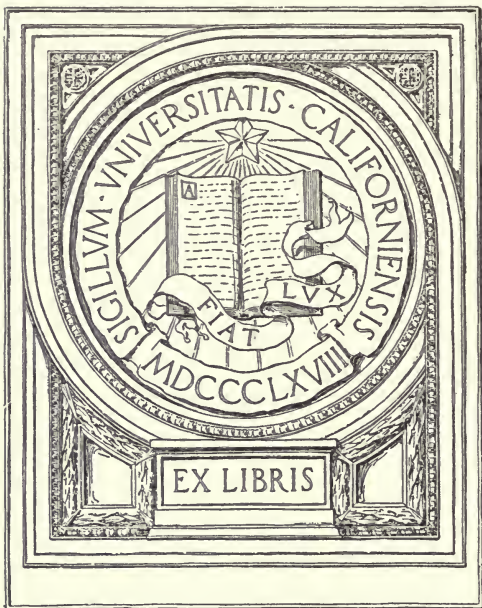


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*The Political Questions of the Day*

Washburn

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THE

# Political Questions

OF THE DAY:

An Address delivered at Broadway Hall,

OAKLAND,

*Mr.* December 24th, 1873,

BY

CHARLES A. WASHBURN.



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## ADDRESS.

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Among the weaknesses of human nature to which all men are subject, and which all wise men deplore, is that of procrastination. The most trivial and common-place affairs are allowed to push aside those serious matters that should be the rule of conduct and guide of life. Of the duties thus deferred, is that of attending to public affairs and of investigating those things which it is everybody's business to act upon, but which are seldom duly considered and examined till the time for action is close at hand. Then it is when impartial investigation is impossible, when in the heat and excitement of a political canvass the judgment is warped and blinded by partisan prejudice, that most people give any serious attention to the affairs of State; and as they are by this time no longer open to argument or conviction, they follow their old-time leaders in their efforts to glorify their party and justify themselves in adhering to dead issues and party distinctions. The platoons and cohorts of party very seldom change front after the battle has begun, and if we look through the political history of our own times, we may notice that the thoughts of men have crystallized into convictions when neither canvassing nor stump-speaking were availed of to befog the intellect or excite the passions. Revolutions, though sudden in appearance, are years in their growth. It took not only decades and generations, but centuries of tyranny over submission, of bigotry over credulity, of knowledge over ignorance, of luxury in the midst of want, to so surcharge the French nation with that complete sense of their wrongs, which, when it broke forth and first felt its own power, became an engine of atrocities, to be guided at the pleasure of a Couthon, a Robespierre, or a Marat. Men do not become infuriate merciless demons, to combine in large numbers and indulge in brutal crimes, until they have first been subjected to prolonged and cruel injustice. And when they do break forth in revolt, their excesses will be in a ratio corresponding with the oppressions and wrongs that they have suffered.

So it was the great change that took place in the public mind during the twenty years that preceded the great rebellion, rather than that defiance and mullification had culminated in an attack on the flag at Fort Sumter, that led necessarily to a war of sec-

tions. The same spirit of defiance had been shown thirty years before. But the people had then scarcely begun to realize their accountability for a system which they acknowledged to be wrong, and which they thought might most profitably be let alone. Yet a revolution was all this time in progress. The changed sentiment of the country found expression in the election of Abraham Lincoln ; and when resistance was next offered, it was found that the day for compromise had gone by ; the people of the free States were prepared to meet force with force, and ready to atone with their own blood for their indifference in the past.

The authors of this revolution were not the men who led our armies to battle. The real heroes who braved the storms of obloquy and abuse by venturing to tell people of their duties as well as their interests, were the men who deserve the most noble apotheosis. It is to John Quincy Adams, to Garrison, to Seward and Theodore Parker ; to Greeley, and Hale, and Bailey and their co-laborers, rather than to Grant, or Sherman, or Sheridan, or Thomas, or Farragut that we owe it, that there is no longer an irrepressible conflict. These latter were never moved by those grand ideas of statesmanship and eternal right as were the former. Though with their own good swords they cut the way to victory, and *peace without conflict*, yet to a higher degree is the nation's gratitude due to those noble men who pioneered the revolution on the ground of principle and right.

But a panic is not a revolution. It is but a spasmodic outburst that may be for a day, a month, or a year ; and when it subsides, people are as indifferent as ever to the causes that produced it. Under its excitement men become unreasoning, proscriptive, and unjust, indulging in persecutions which they recoil from in their cooler moments. The "know-nothing" whirlwind that swept over the country less than twenty years ago was a panic and not a revolution. It was but a ripple on the surface of the great current of events, and when it subsided people became more apathetic than ever respecting the causes that had provoked it. Ashamed for having lent themselves to a cause so narrow and contracted in its aims and purposes, they sought to show their apostacy to it by indifference to the one principle on which it was founded.

Now whether we are in the midst of a revolution or merely in a panic, is to be judged from the magnitude of the issues before the public. If for a long time people have been ground under the iron heel of monopolies and corporations, from which there is no escape by means of the Constitution and laws of the country, then it is time for a revolution that shall overturn the Constitution and give us a better government. But if it is but an awakening of the people to their own shortcomings in neglecting their own interests



and choosing incompetent and corrupt men to be their law makers, and which only required a popular expression to correct the evils, then it is a panic which, like the thunder storm, will be of short duration but yet shall purify the political atmosphere and arouse people to the duty of requiring a higher standard of official morality. But whether it is a panic or a revolution, there is none of that partisan blindness which during the excitement of an election prevents a fair discussion of the situation. Parties seem to be assuming those new relations incident to the burial of old issues and the consequent necessity of new ones; and therefore I take the occasion to offer some suggestions, in the hope that they may be weighed and considered during the lull of party politics that now obtains. I speak for no party, and if my ideas be crude and my views impractical they commit no one but myself.

In times past a few of us felt it to be our duty to advocate principles and doctrines that were then so unpopular as to be dangerous to those who upheld them. Since then they have become the law of the land, and are now almost universally approved. 'Tis true the later lights of the successful party, like Felton, and Booth, and Gorham, and Swift, and Shannon, and Bowie, and Upson, and Paul Morrill, if they condescended to notice us, always denounced us as disturbers and fanatics; but no sooner did the fires of success light up the fields of carnage and booty than we found them in the front, denouncing us neglectful of the "man and brother." So I expect to live to see the day when the measures and policy I have now to suggest, but for which I claim nothing new, will be as universally accepted and to see those who shall at first deride and oppose them afterwards support them so zealously, when they see them becoming popular, that they will denounce me for lukewarmness. It matters little that a measure when first broached is ill received. Innovation is ways offensive to habit and self-conceit. Men take it as an insult if they are told that what they have been accustomed to consider as the perfection of wisdom is not really so, and that they have been blindly and stupidly carrying burdens from which one good vigorous thought would relieve them. They hate to acknowledge their folly by giving the vigorous thought and so plod on in the old way.

The late Horace Greeley adopted as a principle in the conduct of his newspaper, that he would tell people not what they wished to hear, but what they ought to know. By adherence to this policy he placed the *Tribune* on a higher plane than that of its contemporaries, and made it, so long as the rule was observed, the most potent journal in the country. Yet with this encouraging example, how few do we find who can rise above the tricks of the

demagogue, and tell just what they believe. How seldom do we find an editor in this respect like Greeley, and among public speakers do we ever find one who does not try to flatter his audience? who is willing to hazard his popularity by boldly advancing truths that he knows will provoke hisses instead of applause, and send him to Coventry sooner than to Congress? Occasionally, one who has no popularity to lose, and can, therefore, never be a candidate for the popular suffrages, may venture to tell people what they ought to know, being utterly indifferent, so far as he himself is concerned, whether they like it or not. Such a man do I profess myself, and to convince you that I am in earnest, I expect to speak to you in a manner that will offend everybody who honors me with his attention. At the same time, I expect to say something that will please everybody, for men are prone to delight in seeing the follies and errors of others exposed, though they take it in high dudgeon when their own shortcomings are held up to ridicule and censure. Hence, as I do not expect that very many will agree with me on every point, I hope to speak plainly enough, and set forth my ideas clearly enough to offend all the rest.

And now, to come at once to the practical questions of the day, what are the issues now before the people of California, or rather those that during the recent political campaign received most of their attention? What measures were they discussing at their firesides, in the public mart, on the streets, in the counting-house, the tavern, and the corner grocery? Not tariffs nor free trade, not questions of labor and its reward, of European immigration, of home manufactures, or of becoming one of the United States, by adopting the national currency. Nothing was said during that war of gladiators of reducing the hours of a legal day's labor; nothing was avowed publicly and above-board of guarding the avenues of learning against the efforts of bigots and sectarians; nothing of educating the masses to self-reliance and independence, that they might guard themselves against the devices of the devil, now in the form of a ranting leveler and now in the garb of a Jesuit priest. On all these matters scarce a word was said, but the sole question over which the dominant party contended was this: shall California be next represented in the United States Senate by George C. Gorham or Newton Booth? This question was agitated and discussed by our newspapers and public speakers almost to the exclusion of every other, as if they wished to belittle us as a State and dwarf us as a people, by a tacit admission that there was no one else in the State competent to the position of Senator, and that, too, when we had, standing out resplendent with their acquired laurels, such intellectual giants as Cole and Fay—such prodigies of purity and honesty as Casserly and Pixley.

The stalking horse behind which the contestants discharged their blunderbusses, was the Central Pacific Railroad ; and though no one pretended to tell how the people were to be relieved from the insolence and overcharging of the great monopoly by the election of this man or the defeat of that, they had the satisfaction of making ugly faces at the Company, and of seeing it obliged to suspend the extension of its roads into the more remote parts of the State. They had the higher satisfaction of seeing the construction of other roads to the Pacific, also suspended, and their completion postponed for a long time ; so that for years to come, the Central Pacific will have a complete monopoly of the overland business. The catastrophe which the destructives have precipitated, will put millions of dollars into the pockets of Stanford and his fellow despoilers ; and for indefinite years must the people of the Pacific Coast submit to the tyranny and exactions of a grasping, defiant monopoly.

But all through this campaign, the vital practical living issues that directly and immediately touch the interests of the people, were utterly ignored. The result was an expression of popular hostility to that chief of abominations, the railroad monopoly, which holds the material interests of the State in its iron folds ; that huge constrictor that has so effectually crushed out competition, that trade, and commerce, and agriculture are at the mercy of a merciless despotism. But this expression of the public voice was, I fear, only a voice ; *vox et præterea nihil*. Among all the speeches and editorials of the campaign denouncing the railroad monopoly, no remedy was proposed ; no means suggested to repress its arrogance, or counteract its power for evil. No one who exposed or railed at its abuses rose to the dignity of statesmanship so far as to suggest any plan of relief. We did not lack for scolds to denounce and threaten. Destructives and levelers were to be heard at every gathering. But the voice of a statesman—of a constructive political leader and economist, who could propose anything to supplant this grinding monopoly, and give us something better—something that should aid the farmer and mechanic—something that should bring us capital, and create factories, thus finding employment for all who are willing to labor—that voice was never heard. Of cheap demagogues who could pull down—who could decry existing evils—the world has never known a lack—but of those who could suggest measures of improvement, and, as remedies to admitted abuses have advocated innovations and changes of a constructive and creative character, there has always been a marvelous scarcity. And when we have had one with the energy and courage to undertake great enterprises, and successfully put them into execution, we have had whole communities to say that



such things ought to be done. We have numberless writers and editors to tell us of the benefits to be received by the public, if other people will only undertake and carry through such schemes as the introduction of pure water, the construction of gas works, manufactories, and railroads. Appeals to men of wealth and enterprise are incessant for them to come forward and carry out these projects, and earn the gratitude of the people, who, in turn, will build them monuments of marble or of bronze. But the monuments to those who do undertake these public works, if they succeed, and do not beggar themselves, are not generally of marble, but they are more often effigies of themselves, to be burnt in the public streets, as if they were public enemies.

A dozen years ago, the great necessity of California was felt to be a Pacific railroad. Our speakers and politicians waxed eloquent on this subject, and our newspapers were teeming with articles, showing that it was the duty of Congress to aid and of capitalists to undertake that great work.

At last a few men of limited means, but of patriotic impulses, who, long before the war, had been pronounced in their opposition to the extension of slavery, had the sagacity to see that a Pacific railroad was a national necessity, that as a union measure it ought to receive the support of the national government, and casting their bread upon the waters, they embarked all they had in the perilous venture: their name as responsible, fair-dealing men; their fortunes, which, though not large, had been acquired by years of toil and economy; their assured competency, for the risk of failure, bankruptcy, and an old age of penury. But they ventured all; and when abroad I learned of the success of the enterprise, I confess I rejoiced to know that it was in the hands of union men, men with whom I had been in sympathy, during those angry days preceding the rebellion; men who had been known as earnest, self-sacrificing Republicans; good citizens, commanding the respect of all as men of integrity and public spirit. And the people of California recognized the service that those men had rendered to the State and nation, and rejoiced at their success; and had they been satisfied, not with moderate, but with enormous fortunes, they would have been regarded to this day as great public benefactors, entitled to all the civic honors that a generous people could bestow.

But who and what are those men now? Their career illustrates as well as any example since Elisha foretold to Hazael, the change that should come over him on his accession to power, the wisdom of the prayer of Agur, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."



These men who as merchants or business men stood above reproach, whose word was as good as their bond, who would be ashamed to take an unfair advantage in business, what would they not do now, as monopolists and millionaires to carry a point! There is hardly a meanness to which they will not stoop, or an advantage they will not take. As men of business, whose standing depended on their general character, they would scorn to meddle in the low tricks of politics. But as railroad kings they thrust their polluting hands into every ward caucus. They dictate to their followers their boarding-houses and washwomen. They discriminate in their charges to the minutest details, giving special rates to their friends, or rather subjects, general rates to the public, and excessive rates to their enemies or competitors. They wish it to be understood that it is for every man's interest to bow down and worship them, and to make that plain, they plant the iron heel on these who refuse to do so. Leland Stanford, the oil merchant, would never have set up a rival candle shop alongside of a small dealer on another square to break him down, nor would Huntington, much less Hopkins, have kept an hour in his employ an expressman who had purposely run down and smashed up the wagon of a rival hardware dealer. There is not a hoodlum that cries newspapers on the streets, nor a blear-eyed cripple who sells songs and cheap literature at the crossings, who would not be ashamed to sell you yesterday's paper for that just issued, or to take your money on the last day of December for an almanac of the expiring year, when you had paid it for the one which was incoming. But the railroad kings, now they are so rich and powerful, that they feel they are above the law and can with impunity defy and insult whom they please, do not think it out of the way to run an opposition steamer in order to break down any little boat that should try to accommodate people they had before neglected; or to endanger the lives of scores of people by running down the vessel that had the temerity to carry them in opposition to the great monopoly. They have no shame in taking your money or my money for a commutation ticket from Oakland to San Francisco within three days of the end of the month, and putting on you a ticket good only for two or three trips, when you think, and they know you think, you are commuting for a month. *They* can sell you yesterday's daily, or last year's almanac, and when you complain to their underlings the satisfaction you get will be a brief notice that you can go to the devil.

Does any one excuse such acts? Not one; and we shall be told that the chief men of a vast corporation cannot know of the insolence and impertinence of their underlings and upstarts. But if there is any truth in maxims or proverbs, this is true: "Like master, like man." The employés of the railroad company know full

well what general deportment will most please their employers. For years I had the fortune, good or bad, to reside in a country where the government was an absolute despotism. The head of that government was a monster without parallel in the history of the world. A tyrant and an arrant coward, who saw an enemy in every bush, and quivered and shook at every sound, his only delight was in the misery of those around him. His diversion was the infliction of torture, and he spared neither age nor sex. Neither fidelity nor kinship came between him and his victims. His best officers were arrested, flogged, and shot, without knowing their offense. His brothers and sisters were tortured days, weeks, and months, being kept alive solely that their unnatural brother might enjoy the sight of their agony. His own mother was treated with the same unnatural brutality, and when rescued from the grasp of her tiger cub, her back was but one mass of putrid sores, in which the maggots held carnival. This man, or rather monster, did not apply the lash with his own hand to the backs of his brothers, sisters or mother, nor did he tie the thongs that were to tear his victim's limbs from their sockets. But his underlings knew well his fierce and cruel character, and that any leniency shown to prisoners would subject them to equal tortures, while any excesses would be forgiven, or rather would procure promotion and favor. Hence they showed alacrity in torture, and seemed to enjoy its infliction. The same spirit of flunkeyism may be seen everywhere. The arrogant, ill-natured, tyrannical master is sure to be waited on by one who takes pride in imitating his rudeness and brutality. If the subordinates of the railroad are rude and uncivil to the public, they are so in imitation of their chiefs. They have learned that complaints for incivility are either not heeded or are passed to their credit as showing zeal for their masters' interests.

That such men, whose wealth is told by millions, should stoop to such contemptible tricks merely for the slight pecuniary gain to themselves, is incredible. It is the lust of power that governs them in descending to such meanness; they want to make people feel how broad is the scope of their influence, and that there is no one so humble but he may be reached by the wand of their monopoly and be made to wither and wilt as did the tree which Christ cursed. They wish all to understand that they are responsible to neither God nor man; that they are to say who shall be Senators and Representatives in Congress, State legislators and judges.

That it is the lust of power which now governs them, is evident from the fact that their wealth of many millions to each is far more than they can care for, either for comfort and luxury to themselves, or for a heritage to their children. The almost universal experience of Republican institutions in America is, that colossal fortunes

are dissipated within one or two generations; and it is not to be supposed that either of these railroad magnates will be so inconsistent as to be a rival of Peabody or Girard, and to leave the millions, wrung to a large extent, at the price of the curses and cries of the multitude, to compound with the future for the oppressions of the present, by founding some scientific, charitable, or educational institution. No; philanthropy does not rob Peter to pay Paul, nor wrong the neighbor to be generous to the stranger. It does not refuse justice to bestow bounty.

I do not say that in the use they make of their power they are not like other men. Who can say that he, if suddenly lifted to great wealth and power, would not abuse them to tyrannize over his fellow-men? If such known philanthropists as Pickering or Fitch, and Fay and Cohen, and Reese and Haggin—men who are known to wander about nights to find avenues for their charities—were told that within a month a controlling interest in the C. P. R. R. would be theirs, and that they would be as extortionate, as avaricious, unjust and insolent as Stanford, and Huntington, and Hopkins, would not each exclaim: "But what; is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing!" And yet who does not know that if such a change were made, it would not be two months before the whole people would cry out for the return of King Log, in the place of King Serpent.

The truth is, as shown by all history, irresponsible power is to be entrusted to no man and to no set of men. In the hands of the best of men, even, it is always abused; and if experience teaches anything, it is that all authority should be subject to and under the direct control of the strong arm of the people. The divine right of kings is an exploded doctrine, and is not to be succeeded by the divine right of monopolies. The privileges of feudalism and the old *noblesse*, are not to be relegated to the princes of shoddy or the manipulators of swindling raids on the Government.

It is often said by superficial thinkers, that every people have as good a government as they deserve: that as the power lies with them it is their fault if they submit to oppression. Though this is not universally true, it is true of the citizens of a republic. If they have a bad government and permit speculation, and fraud, and official incompetency, when they and they alone have the power to correct all abuses, then they deserve to suffer, and we should rejoice in their agony of oppression, for that and that alone will arouse them to their duties as members of the body politic. Society, or rather the great public, in every country where despotism is not absolute, is like a galvanic battery. This instrument may be charged with electricity to a small extent, and the subtle fluid may be allowed to accumulate unnoticed until it can hold no more. It has no outlet



or conductor, and when the point of its utmost capacity is reached, it leaps forth like a thunder clap, shivering all before it. So one abuse may be perpetrated against the people, and then another and another. All see and realize it and seem to acquiesce in it, yet all the time the body politic is getting overcharged with resentment, or, if I may so call it, the electricity of indignation. The perpetrators, grown bold at the public indifference, give another turn to the crank, and then they add another, till, just as they come to believe that the people are mere passive machines, the accumulated wrath leaps out with a lightning flash, the structures of fraud and oppression are scattered in fragments, to be succeeded by a clear sky, a healthier atmosphere.

In this country the cumulative wrongs take the form of gigantic monopolies, and are of a most dangerous and fatal character. Those of a more general character are the railroad, the telegraph and the combinations of capitalists to keep money out of the country in order that interest may be kept at a high rate.

Of all the inventions and enterprises that in these later days enter into the the comforts and necessities of the entire community, the telegraph and the railroad alone possess the conditions essential to a strict monopoly. For their better working and greater usefulness they should be all under one management, and no competition should be possible. While this may not be practicable at present, or to a limited extent only, so far as a railroads are concerned, yet there is no reason why the telegraph should not be so managed.

Telegraph lines, to be self-supporting, must be many thousand miles in length, and should be able to gather the news and bear the messages from thousands of distant points. The lines of one company can do all the business on any and all routes at cheaper rates than it can be done by two or more. The expenses of build- and operating more than one, will necessarily be greater than those of a single line that should do all the business. For this increased expense, of course, the public must pay; and hence it is as clear as the demonstration of a problem in Euclid, that in the telegraphing of the country there should be no competition. It should be done in the cheapest manner possible, and at rates so low as to make it a self-sustaining institution of the government; no more, no less. It should be like the Post Office, a department run for the public good, for which each man who used it should pay just the cost of sending and delivering his message.

But railroads over the same routes can bear competition still less than telegraphs. In fact in most cases competition is practically impossible. On the through lines between important points competition may and does exist, but that is because the roads pass through different sections of country and accomodate a different way-travel

on which there is no competition. But over the same routes parallel lines would be simply ruinous, and hence they do not exist. In no other branch of business does the same opportunity for monopoly exist as in these two. It is true, that a city can tolerate a gas monopoly or a water monopoly if it chooses, but there is nothing in nature to prevent other companies from making and selling gas in opposition, though the expenses would thereby be increased and the aggregate cost of gas to the community would be more. Hence it would be better, except for the scarcity of honest men in municipal councils, for the cities to own their own gas and water works.

There is a great deal of talk about other monopolies, especially about the monopoly given to manufacturers, by reason of a protective tariff. But for this complaint there is absolutely no foundation in reason. What though the manufacturers of cutlery, or cut glass, of wooden ware, or of iron houses, make their ten, twenty, or thirty per cent. per annum on their capital, while the man who owns houses and lets them, or owns money and loans it, gets but half that interest. Why does not this latter sell his houses, or call in his loans, and go into one of these favored manufacturing enterprises that pay such enormous profits? Why does he not get the advantage of this protective tariff by going into manufacturing business, thereby doubling his profits at the same time that he gives employment to the men around him? A year or two since, and that poor oppressed friend of the people, Cornelius Vanderbilt, complained that, owing to the duty on iron and coal, the miners and manufacturers of Pennsylvania were getting a larger interest on their capital than he was, and he wanted the tariff amended so that he could import iron and coal free of duty. But the great advocate of protection, and chosen leader of the Democratic party, Horace Greeley, promptly met him with the charge that he was a fraud and an impostor. Why, said he, if manufacturing is so profitable as you pretend, why do you not take a few of those ill-gotten millions, with which you are now trying to embarrass the government and all legitimate enterprises by your illicit speculations in Wall street, and open some iron and coal mines of your own? Why do you not build some furnaces, foundries, and machine-shops, and so share in these enormous profits of the manufacturers? The field is open, and wherever the profits are unusually large, let capital and enterprise enter and take possession. But Vanderbilt did not venture his money in any such undertaking, for though he had not too much principle to act the demagogue, he had too much sense not to know that in a country of free and intelligent people, where everybody is striving to get into the best paying business, no field yielding extra profits is ever left long unoccupied. My friend, Michael Reese, complains that he

gets only eighteen per cent. a year on his loaned millions, while my other friend, Donald McLellan, gets twenty-five per cent. in his business of manufacturing blankets; whereas, if the duties on woollen goods were taken off, poor Michael might get the blankets that he sleeps under for one or two dollars a pair less, and Donald, after borrowing all the money he could from Michael, in order to keep on in business and keep his men employed, rather than turn them into the streets to starve, or to still further glut the labor market, he could close up his business, and deed his factory to the free trade philanthropist, to be used as a rookery. But, as the duties are not likely to be taken off, why does not Michael engage in one of those manufacturing monopolies? Does he think the investment would pay him so large an interest, that his conscience would not permit him to take it? Perhaps that is the reason; but a more likely one is, that he knows manufacturing in California, even with all the protection afforded by the present tariff, does not, as a general thing, pay so high an interest as may be realized in other ways. Hence, I am justified in saying that monopolies in this country are limited to matters in which, for reasons of a physical character, there can be no competition; and of these, the two of most importance are the railroad and the telegraph.

And of these two, the telegraph, as now managed, is the greater abomination, and in all its aspects and features answers more nearly the description of an odious monopoly—the most odious and dangerous ever known in the United States. Its network is spread all over the country. Its power as a political engine exceeds that of the Federal Government, with its standing army of office-holders. It is entirely antagonistic to the genius and spirit of Republican institutions; a monopoly in the hands of the most unscrupulous stock-gamblers in the country. A majority of the stock is owned by none other than Commodore Vanderbilt, the richest as well as the meanest man in the United States. None but a very rich man, one having millions, is capable of the meanest acts. Vanderbilt with his hundred millions dares and does do things that would cause another man, having only his hundreds of thousands, to be scorned and shunned, and driven from all business and social circles. And this is the man who controls the Western Union Telegraph, and not only that, but he has a preponderating influence on railroad lines that represent on the stock board \$215,000,000.

With his foot on the neck of commerce, his hand is on the throat of general intelligence, which is doled out to the people of the United States as suits his pleasure or interest. The policy of this Company, of which he is the controlling spirit, is not only to make enormous dividends to its managers, but to furnish people with the knowledge on which they shall found their opinions.



In the dark ages of priestcraft and superstition, when the cowl was paramount to the crown, and learning was the monopoly of the cloister, it was the policy of the priests to hold the keys of knowledge in their own hands; and, so long as they could do this, they governed the world. They knew that knowledge was power, and the most dangerous order to human freedom and enlightenment which the world has ever known has constantly labored to prevent people from receiving any knowledge except such as was filtered through the sieves of Jesuitical bigotry, and was stamped and approved by the maw-worms of superstition. The disciples of Loyola are more busy and hopeful to-day than at any time since the principal sovereigns of Catholic Europe were compelled in self-protection to banish them, as insufferable pests, from their dominions. Their object still is to hold the keys of knowledge. The free non-sectarian school is their abomination, and they are subordinating all other questions to this one of the control of the school money. They would have the youth reared in the belief that their teachings are true and infallible, well knowing that when the majority of the people shall accept them as their sole guides in morals and religion, the church will be as absolute in authority as in the good old days when Galileo was imprisoned and Jews and heretics were roasted by scores at every *auto-da-fe* for the amusement and spiritual edification of the saints. These were the Jesuits of Loyola. Hard, bigoted, and logical, they sought power by holding the gates of learning. But we have now another order of Jesuits, harder and more selfish than the others, but neither as honest nor as logical. They are the political, financial Jesuits, who seek to control the avenues of knowledge to the people, whom they tax enormously for the information which they allow them to receive, at the same time they try to wield the power that elects Presidents and Senators, and blasts reputations, and makes heroes of nonentities in a manner never thought of by Pope or Emperor.

The Western Union Telegraph now has its lines extended to all parts of the United States, and all the information it gives to the people must pass through the hands of agents, who are responsible only to the Company. Its charges are so excessive as to pay large dividends on stock so watered that its nominal value is five times the actual cost. On an investment of eight millions, and that mostly the earnings of the lines, the Company extort from the public dividends on forty millions, reserving all the while a fund sufficient to break down opposition throughout the less populous parts of the country. Between such large cities as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, where the business is so vast they cannot afford a destructive opposition, the rates are reasonably low. But wherever there is no competition, the charges are so

excessive that the telegraph is scarcely available for any but the rich.

It is but about two years ago that a ten-word telegram from San Francisco to New York was \$5. It would probably have been at that figure still, but for the antagonism of the other great monopoly, the Central Pacific R. R. Company. No ordinary company could have established and maintained opposition lines, but the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific needed one for their own accommodation; it was useless for the Western Union to attempt to break them down by running opposition at losing rates. So they compromised by cutting down prices to half what it was, and five times what it ought to be. For this favor, this fraction of a just reform, the people of California and the whole Pacific Coast are indebted, not to the independent press that claims to be the special foe of all monopolies, but to the Central Pacific R. R. Company.

As an adjunct of the Western Union Company, is another monopoly, so closely connected with it as to be almost, if not altogether, a part of it. This is the Associated Press Company. This Company has its agents in all the principal cities, and, at less important points, the telegraph operators act in that capacity. Thus united this double monopoly has a great advantage in the collection and distribution of news over anybody and everybody else; and as the Associated Press has special rates for its transmission, all newspapers not belonging to it are at such a disadvantage, they can only keep the field by superior ability and enterprise. This Association is a close corporation, to which only three papers in California are admitted. And these three papers claim to be the champions of the people against all monopolies; at the same time, they maintain that one which is the most dangerous and most detestable of all.

In these days of rapid transit and great activity, the majority of people read little beside the first telegraphic news, and therefore they are almost compelled to take those papers having the fullest dispatches. Under existing monopolies it is scarcely possible that any papers can be so well served in that respect as those belonging to the combination. Hence people are forced to take them, no matter how much they detest their principles, or dislike their proprietors. Having the power of coloring all facts of public interest, and knowing that opinions take form according to first impressions, a monopoly like this may shape the national parties to a great extent, and make great men of charlatans, and rogues the popular favorites.

And why has this monstrous monopoly been tolerated so long, and why has not the press generally denounced and exposed it? The telegraph company have provided against that. In its con-



tracts with newspapers it provides that they shall receive dispatches only on condition that nothing unfriendly or adverse to the monopoly shall be admitted into their columns. The newspapers must be muzzled, before they can have the permission of Vanderbilt, Orton and Simonton to publish news. An independent press! Thralls and hirelings of a jesuitical despotism, rather let it be called.

And now the question arises, how is this monopoly to be broken up? The Western Union people will tell us that we have only to establish other lines alongside of theirs, and the thing is done. But how are you and I that haven't any forty millions, or even eight millions, to start an opposition, to help ourselves? We are powerless, and they know it, and so they insult us by telling us to help ourselves, if we can. In other countries, the government has stepped in and bought up the private lines, and taken the whole telegraph business into its own hands. The result is, much better service at cheaper rates, at the same time that the business is self-supporting.

The objection, and the only valid one in this country, to having the telegraph under the management of the Government is, the danger of centralization. It is feared that with the control of this vast engine of power, the Government might use it for improper purposes; that it would largely increase the number of Federal office-holders, and that an ambitious President might use it to perpetuate his power; that a third term, or a life term, would be easy, if the avenues of knowledge were guarded by those already in authority. There is force in this argument. There might be danger to Republican institutions, if the telegraph were under the control of the Post Office Department; but of course there can be none when it is managed by and for such immaculate patriots as Vanderbilt, Orton and Simonton, Pickering, Fitch and Anthony.

Now I admit the danger of centralization, and that a great power like that of the telegraph, ought not to be in the hands of the Federal administration. But a monopoly that is responsible to Congress is not so dangerous as one that is responsible to Vanderbilt. But is there no remedy against the abuse of such power possible? May not the Government own the telegraph, and yet not have the control of it? Cannot it be placed, though the property of the nation, in the hands of men who are not only above suspicion, but who shall be independent of the President, and not beholden to him either for their appointment or continuance in office? It can be done; and it is the simplest thing in the world to put not only the telegraph, but the great railroad interests of the country under a direction that shall be efficient and harmonious, and yet be independent of the Federal Government—so independent, that Imperial Caesar could not turn off a brakeman, or find a place for a favorite.

For the Government to purchase all the railroads, or even a quarter of them, and try to manage them, is preposterous. A measure of this kind would not be approved by the people, and hence it is idle to discuss its merits or feasibility. It would so increase the national debt, as to seriously prejudice the country's credit, and would give occasion for a standing army of office-holders so numerous as to be dangerous. Civil Service Reform, or some other scheme, must be devised, by which the management of the road should not be subject to Federal interference; and even then the Government must begin by purchasing or building only one or two great highways from the granaries of the West to the seashore, and with a view specially, if not entirely, to reducing the cost of transportation.

For many years the people of the Mississippi Valley have been groaning under the extortions of the railroads. So large a part of all they could raise has been taken to get the rest to market, they have found that even with industry and economy and abundant crops, they would make but little more than a meager subsistence; while the managers and directors of the roads have as a rule become so rich as to reckon their ill-gotten gains by millions. These enormous fortunes have all been realized by overcharging the farmers, the merchants and the general public. Each million of Vanderbilt, of Drew, of Jay Gould and of the departed Jim Fisk, represented the toil and sweat, the hard fare and the extra hours of labor of the workingman, so that they have all clothed themselves with curses as with a garment. In casting about for relief from this monopoly of transportation, the plundered farmers have proposed such national and State legislation as would compel the roads to charge only a certain price, both for freight and fare. But measures of this kind can bring little relief, for what power short of an absolute despotism can compel a man or a company to carry freight at all, or at a faster or cheaper rate than is suited to its own interest or convenience. The government, it is true, may require uniformity and general rates for everybody, and that freight or fare shall not exceed a given amount per mile; but what if under this law a company finds it must lose money on every train? who then is to compel it to light its fires or run its engines?

The good people of the State of Illinois thought to help themselves by passing a law that no higher rates should be charged on local freight for short distances than was charged for through freight across the State. Now as the local business is nearly always the principal source of revenue, it was inevitable that in adjusting the new rates to meet the requirements of the law, the prices on through freights and fares must be augmented, while the local rates would be diminished. But on the through routes there

is great competition, and if the roads were compelled to raise the price of transportation across the State, then must the through freights seek other routes and avoid Illinois in their transit east and west. But if, on the other hand, the local rates were reduced to correspond with those for long distances, than the roads would lose money on half the trains they run. In that case they would run a less number of them, and many places before accommodated would cease to hear the whistle of the locomotive. In this country there is no power to compel a railroad company to run its trains any more than there is to compel a private citizen to go to church or abstain from meat on Friday. Uniform rules prescribed by the government can never secure equal justice under such a multiplicity of circumstances and such a variety of conditions as is presented by the railroad interests of this country. There must be a plan devised that will admit of a certain amount of flexibility, so that every man shall be required to pay cost and no more for what he receives.

Therefore I say there is no remedy but for the Federal Government to come to the rescue. The cities of the East realize that that they are the losers, as well as the Western farmers, in having the crops of the West rot on the ground, or the corn burned for fuel. To manufacture cheaply they must have cheap bread and cheap meat, but these things they can get only with cheaper freights. With cheaper food they can extend and increase their business, and the primary question is, how to get it. The capitalists of New England, always noted for sagacity, see that there are no other ways for bringing the grain crop of the West to the sea except by the way of the Vanderbilt, Drew & Gould railroads. They find that the St. Lawrence river may be made available as a great highway, and that other routes for transportation may be availed of to bring down the price of freights, and the interests of the great manufacturing towns of the East are so vast that they will have cheaper connection with the West in spite of the railroad kings of New York, and with or without the aid of the Grangers. The interests of rival cities on the sea coast must in the end compel reduced rates. In anticipation of such opposition, the moneyed men of New York, not of the railroad circle, who wish to concentrate the whole business of the country at New York, have projected an airline double-track freight road from Chicago to New York. This, they think, would give the latter city an advantage over any other sea-board town; but when completed it would be run entirely in the interests of its owners, and would be just as selfish or eager for big profits as Vanderbilt, or Drew, or Jay Gould. They would keep up their schedule to the highest notch possible without driving away freight to other cities and by other roads. Men never build



railroads for philanthropy, but for profits; and the world is old enough for people to have learned that they can never confer peculiar power or grant special privileges on individuals or corporations that will not use them and abuse them for their own special benefit.

That this road may be run in the interests of the people and with no regard to profits of directors or stockholders, it should, it must be owned by the United States. It should be a freight and emigrant road, made and ballasted in the best manner possible; the trains to run at a low rate of speed, and the schedule of freight and passage should be so low as but to pay the cost of keeping the road in repair, and an interest of say six per cent. on its cost to the Government. Thus managed the Government could never be a loser, and the people who used the road and had the benefit of it, would be those who paid the interest on its cost.

So built and so managed, the road would carry freight for one-fourth or one-half of the present rates, and having established the fact that one road could carry freights and passengers at such reduced prices, people would understand that other roads could do the same, at least approximately; and if they did not, it would be because of mismanagement, Credit Mobilier rings, or from a desire to pay large dividends on stock highly diluted with water.

But this road would not stop at Chicago. It would be extended across the broad plains of Illinois, and Iowa to the Missouri River, and thence inevitably to San Francisco. That the Union Pacific and Central Pacific must fall into the hands of the government sooner or later, unless the first bond-holders are literally robbed of everything, I suppose no one doubts. That the companies ever expect to pay for them, and own them with a clear title, and no unpaid bond or claim hanging over them, I suppose no intelligent person believes. That part of the great scheme may, therefore, be said to be already half accomplished, and with a people united and determined no longer to submit to the extortions of the existing monopolies, but to have a government telegraph, and one great central thoroughfare, which shall serve as a regulator and guide to other roads, it will be but a short time before the extortions now practiced, both by telegraphs and railroads, will find a lasting remedy.

The questions that now first occur in connection with this plan are, how can such an increase of power be conferred on the Federal Government without risk of abuse? Will not the people, from a wholesome dread of centralization, rather suffer present evils than venture on an experiment so dangerous to Republican institutions?

But these dangers may all be avoided, and then the objections will be answered. I will tell you how, and I claim nothing new

nor original in what I have to propose. My plan is something similar to, and yet very different from, what the greatest thinker of recent times, John Stewart Mill, proposed in his essay on Representative Government for forming an Upper Chamber of Parliament to supplant the effete and useless House of Lords.

Let us suppose, then, that the United States shall be parceled out into seven divisions ; more might be better, but for the present I will say seven. Let the New England States constitute one of these ; the Pacific States another ; the great Middle States the third ; the Western States the fourth ; the Northwestern States the fifth ; the Southern and Southeastern the sixth and seventh. Now, having in the organic act for building or purchasing the road established certain rules, let a board of directors be constituted, who, under the provisions of the same act, shall have the entire direction of the road and all its affairs, and these directors to be as independent of the President and his Cabinet, and also of Congress, as are the governors of the several States. In their appointments, the President should have neither hand nor voice, for they should come into office under the organic law. At the creation of the board, the director for each division of the States should be the ex-governor, who had served as governor for the longest period, and as vacancies occurred, they should be filled, not by the appointment of the President, not by popular election, but the man who for the most continuous years has been chosen and re-chosen years before as the chief magistrate of his State, should, in virtue of these endorsements, succeed to this high and responsible post ; the highest, and with the exception of the President, the most important in the land.

It is not to be supposed that a board of directors thus constituted would contain many practical railroad men. But they would be sure to be men of practical sense, of approved integrity and general ability. If not experienced in the business they would not be wedded to any favorite theories or prejudiced by former competition or rivalries. And if not practical railroad men, they would at least have the judgment to employ those that were, and to supplement their own deficiencies with the best talent in the country. In attempting any complex or untried business, it is well known that next to knowing all about it is the consciousness of not understanding it, and a realizing sense of the necessity of getting the assistance of those who do.

The promoters of the Central Pacific R. R. were none of them engineers nor practical railroad men when they entered on their great undertaking. A dry goods man, a lawyer, two hardware dealers, and an oil merchant made up the Company, and not one of them knew more of building railroads than he did of building

ships ; and yet their worst enemies will give them credit for having managed their affairs with great ability and probably more successfully than if one or more of them had been railroad builders by trade. But as they all *enjoyed* equal ignorance, they could agree on employing the best talent to be found, thus supplementing their own hard sense with the science, experience and skill of others. So, I believe it would be no objection but rather an advantage, to have a board of directors of a work or interest so vast, composed of men noted rather for their practical sense than for any specialty as engineers, contractors, or financiers. By having the control and direction placed in such hands, the much dreaded centralization would be entirely avoided and both honesty and efficiency be secured. With one great main line at first, and afterwards two, if the success of the first should warrant it, then three or more, traversing the continent, under such management the other lines would find they had real competition. The owners and directors of other roads would be obliged to conform to nearly the same tariff of charges, or else they would find narrow-gauge roads built in great numbers as feeders to the great air-line tracks, thus leaving the old lines with little to support them.

Of course a measure of this kind can only be carried through on the imperative demand of the people. The great railroad monopolists would oppose it at every stage, and every purchasable Congressman and every purchasable newspaper would denounce it as fraught with ruin to the country and the destruction of vested rights. But these monopolists have for years taken the cream of the nation's prosperity, have watered its stock to five times its cost, and received a high rate of interest on its inflated valuation, and it is neither hardship nor injustice for them or the telegraph company to receive the average returns of capital invested in other industries.

Such is my plan in thorough for placing the railroads in such hands that, being built or bought by the Government for the whole people, they may be supported by the whole people, and run for the benefit of the whole people, at the same time that the power and influence of the Federal administration shall be in no whit increased. Perhaps others besides the railroad monopolists and kings would object to such a policy. The destructives, levellers and communists would object to any solution of the problem that would remove all cause of complaint, and would join hands with the monopolists to defeat a measure that should bring prosperity to the land, if at the same time it took away all just ground of complaint against the Government. Destruction is the god of their idolatry, and at this time, when the people are justly clamorous for a constructive statesmanlike policy that shall relieve them from their grievous burdens,



these night-birds of ill omen are heard croaking and threatening, as if in destruction alone people might find redress of all their grievances. Men of this class may be popular for a time. Thus was Absalom, thus Robespierre, thus John Wilkes, thus Aaron Burr. But, fortunately, unreason always rests on a fragile throne, and demagogues who appeal to popular passions, and who incite to destroy, are sure to receive the final reward of an infamous or detested memory. The man who builds an aquaduct that for centuries may give water to the thirsty, or a viaduct to shorten or ease the journey of the footsore traveler, deserves the gratitude of future generations. But to him, whose genius is only for destruction, the best boon is neglect and obscurity, to be followed by impenetrable oblivion.

There is another evil in California, more disastrous in its effects than either the railroad or telegraph monopolies. In one sense this, too, is a monopoly, as it inures entirely to the benefit of a few, and at the expense of the many. I allude to the combined efforts of the money lenders to keep out capital from abroad, whereby the rate of interest is kept up to usurious rates. This monopoly, though in one sense not a monopoly, as it is open to all who have money to lend, is the creature of a dozen men in San Francisco. Their object is to prevent any reduction of the rate of interest; and as this can be done most effectually by keeping out money from abroad, their policy is in direct antagonism to everybody else. Its origin was an unpatriotic, selfish, dishonest desire to avoid the payment of honest debts to their full amount. Our high-toned, honorable capitalists and merchants found when the legal tender act was passed that they could take advantage of the Government's necessities, and get a discharge from their debts by paying them in depreciated currency. When this sneaking repudiation had been achieved, our money kings found that they could make semi-treason doubly profitable; for having paid their own debts with a depreciated currency, they could now, by keeping that currency out of the State as a circulating medium, have a monopoly of money lending. So long as greenbacks did not come to California, there was no danger that eastern capitalists would send money here to invest, as its transfer would involve a loss of from 12 to 50 per cent. Though the interest here was double what it was in New England on securities equally safe, yet who would bring his money here to invest it, when a toll or reduction of two years' interest would be the condition of its introduction? With this import tax on money, it is no wonder that it does not come here; no wonder that we have so little manufacturing; no wonder that our streets are full of men and boys willing to work, but who can find nothing to do. To establish varied industries in California, requires the influx of large capital;

that influx would reduce the rate of interest, and therefore the Shylocks of California have decreed that the national currency shall not be tolerated on this Coast. They are and ever have been financial rebels, whom, both during and since the war, have kept California in a state of semi-rebellion.

This monopoly of capital is well-nigh absolute here. The very man who paid off his own debts at the East in greenbacks, will publicly post his neighbor as a swindler if he attempts the same thing on himself. This he may be loath to do, but his masters, the great capitalists on whom he depends for accommodation, will tolerate no disloyalty among their subjects. Gold, gold, gold, that must be his standard of patriotism, morality, and religion; and he who refuses homage to the golden calf, is set upon and followed with the cry of "mad dog." When Treasurer Cheeseman undertook to convince you that it was your duty as well as your interest to be loyal and true to the Union, you mobbed him and threatened him with death; and yet, had you followed his advice, you would have saved from five to ten millions at least annually to the State of California.

That this is so is apparent when you consider that, if gold and silver were the only currency throughout the United States, prices nominally would everywhere be very much less than they are. The man of a hundred thousand, and the man of ten thousand, would count his wealth as nominally one-half or two-thirds of what it now is. Yet for exchange or purchase of other property, it would buy as much as now. He would, in fact, be just as rich, for the emission of paper does not create wealth. It does, however, inflate prices in nominal values, so that what we import from the East costs us from 30 to 50 per cent. more in gold than it would were there no paper money in existence, and everything was kept down to a specie basis. We have always paid (as well before the war, when the bills of solvent banks were at par, as ever since greenbacks were invented) for the goods we have imported from the Eastern States at the inflated prices caused by the use of paper money; and hence it is as clear as the sun at noonday, that our gold has not the same purchasing power as it would have were it the exclusive currency throughout the whole country. And it is equally clear that if the money necessary for the business of this State were here and in greenbacks, prices of everything else would partake of the inflation of the East. True, our wheat and our wool would bring no more in foreign markets, but our gold and our silver would buy more domestic goods in Eastern markets.

Our adherence to a metallic currency, does not in the least save us from the panics and fluctuations of the East. When gold goes up in Wall Street, the effect is instantly felt on California Street.



A few months since, and there was a rise in the price of gold of nearly ten per cent. in New York. Instantly every man who owed anything at the East, gathered up all the gold he could get and sent it forward, as it would buy more greenbacks, and consequently pay off more debts than it would have done a few weeks earlier, or probably a few weeks later. And in this later panic, which is hardly yet over, San Francisco has felt the effects as much as any city in the Union in proportion to her population. This panic scarcely reached here, yet vast sums of gold were quietly sent forward to be loaned out at a half cent, cent or cent and a half per day, should the panic last as long as our Midases hoped for.

But for the fact that our vast grain crop was just going forward to be drawn against, our money lenders would have had a golden harvest. By refusing extensions and demanding higher margins, they would have gathered all the securities possible, in the way of mortgages, bonds and stocks, into their own hands; and when the storm cleared away they would have been some millions of dollars richer; for the little fish would have been swallowed up by the big whales, for whose benefit the gold currency is maintained.

The great, greatest want of California is home manufactures. They are wanted to give employment to our men, and boys, and girls. They are required to create a home market for the agriculturists. But interest is too high to justify investments in manufacturing, and will be so until we change our currency. With that change millions of money will come here from the East, so many and vast enterprises will be undertaken, so many new fields of labor that every man and every boy can find such occupation, at fair wages, as his tastes and capacity fit him for. At present if there be an appalling, a frightful aspect in our future, it is in the fearful growth of what in the language of the street is called hoodlumism. Our best citizens, the substantial workingmen of the city, those who read the papers, pay most of the taxes, and as they sway this way or that carry the elections, who when they had sons born to them, rejoiced and hoped to bring them up in the paths of industry and virtue, to be like themselves good and useful members of society, find as their boys are growing to early manhood that there is no place for them. They are not needed; there is no field of useful employment open to them. They cannot be apprenticed to learn trades; for the monopoly of labor enjoyed by the trades union will not allow the manufacturing capitalists to take apprentices. The artizan or mechanic who cries out loudly against other combinations, attends caucuses and marches in torchlight processions, shouting "down with monopolies," considers that his own trades union has a vested right to do all the labor in his peculiar line, and that whoever attempts to act independent of their organization is a common enemy to be destroyed.

I can imagine no more gloomy house than that of the worthy industrious man and wife, who have several sons from twelve to twenty years of age. As children, they have always been surrounded by good home influences, and could their vital powers be directed to useful occupations, they would become honest men and useful citizens. But the father can find nothing for them to do. His own time is taken up in providing for them food and clothing. The boys cannot be idle. They must be at work, or they soon get into mischief. They form acquaintances among the vicious, and the parents soon loose all control over them. They wander about at late hours, and the father and mother, as they sit at the family hearthstone at the close of a hard day's toil, have no longer any pleasant topics of conversation. They hear the shout of the hoodlum in the street, and with fear and trembling they listen, dreading lest the door open and their own joy of other days, their first-born, should enter staggering and drunk; or they fear the greater sorrow of hearing that in a drunken brawl he has broken the head of some comrade or Chinaman, and been taken up to prison.

O, it is terrible to think of the array of youth that are growing up in California to be thieves and vagabonds. Hundreds and thousands of parents see their children going in the broad road to destruction, and they have no power to hold them back. The youthful energy must find vent and spend itself in useful occupation, or it will carry them to perdition. But the monopolists of capital will tolerate no change that will bring money from abroad to be loaned at so low a rate of interest as to justify the establishment of home manufactures and other varied industries in which this surplus of youthful energy might be employed. Let the parents of those children, then, bear in mind that our own richest men, who for their own purposes are keeping out the national currency, and thus making the field of industry as contracted as possible, are coining their extra interest from the very blood, the bodies, and souls of their children; who by them are driven into the ways of vice, and crime, and death.

And yet this monopoly, with all its disastrous effects, its crushing influences on the State's prosperity, its filling the country with hoodlums, candidates for the State Prison and the gallows, is sustained and justified by the self-styled independent press. Those papers which enjoy the monopoly of the Western Union telegraph, with its complement of the Associated Press, maintain that this monopoly of capital is a blessed thing. Well they may. The proprietors are all of the money-lending class, and they see that the rate of interest on their loans must come down with the introduction of greenbacks. They may well sustain monstrous monopolies, for they have no young hoodlums in their families to cause

them anxiety, and what matters it to them that the sons of other men are driven into the ways of temptation.

But what is the remedy? A repeal of the specific contract law would now be ineffective, as the Supreme Court of the United States has declared such contracts legal and binding. The State Legislature can do much towards affecting a change, and if the needed legislation could be had and be sustained by the farming community, the thing would be accomplished. In the first place, people should be familiarized with the national currency, and to effect this a law should be passed that all taxes should be collected in greenbacks, and all salaries of State officials paid in the same currency. As the general impression now is that salaries are too high, this would be an excellent way to reduce them from 6 to 12 per cent., at the same time that a vast service would be done to the public at large, by the forced introduction of this amount of currency as a circulating medium. And our patriotic law-makers, it is to be presumed, would not be influenced by their own selfish interest in a measure so fraught with blessings to their constituents. They would doubtless delight to do this, that their conduct might stand forth to the world in contrast with the Congressmen who voted themselves increased pay for the future, and gratuities for the past in the shape of back pay. If the railroad would imitate these patriotic legislators, and reduce the rate of fare and freight to the extent of the difference between gold and greenbacks, and never receive at their offices and stations anything but currency, that more than almost anything else would force people to use greenbacks to a considerable extent, and their introduction into the country would doubtless so stimulate enterprise and immigration that it would be more than repaid by the increase of business.

If to these influences towards the introduction of the national currency, that of the farmers were joined, the thing would be done. If the Grangers would organize into a self-protecting society against the monopolists of the capital, and resolve to sell their wheat and their wool for greenbacks only, but at their equivalent in gold, they could compel the introduction of sufficient paper money to make it the circulating medium of the State. They have but to stand together.

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Were it not that this address had run to so great a length, I would like to consider the transition state of society, of commerce, and civilization in various branches. Owing to the extension of railroads into remote regions, which but a few years ago could contribute nothing towards supplying the markets of the world, vast tracts of before uncultivated lands are now made to contribute to the sustenance of the human family. The food produced now, as compared with former times, is in proportion to the population, very



much increased. Such vast tracts of land, that until recently blossomed only to the desert air, are now brought so near a laboring population, by means of the improvements in transportation, that they are made to furnish food for millions in the more populous parts of the world. Every year the extension of the railroads into the remoter regions of the United States, towards the wilds of Russia, or over the pampas of South America, bring countless acres under the plow, whose products come into competition with those from the old grain-growing regions. Hence, it is hardly possible that the cereals of California can long be exported with profit to the producer. Owing to short crops, this season in Europe, the price of grain is high, and farming throughout the United States is well remunerated. Another year, and with full crops in Germany, France, and on the borders of the Black Sea, there may be no demand for our surplus wheat in any part of the world. What, then, will our farmers do for a market? Will they say that next year will be as this year, and to-morrow shall be as this day, and more abundantly? then Wisdom will say, "thou fool! boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Prudence, forecast, and statesmanship would say, "now is the time to embark in varied industries, to establish factories, to commence the raising of cotton, silk, tobacco, and every useful industry that shall give employment to men, and women, and boys, and shall not, at the same time, add to the threatened surplus of cereals." With such a population, that shall always furnish a home market to the producer, California would be independent and self-supporting, and with their superior natural advantages, her people might become the richest and most highly favored in the world.

But the influence of labor-saving machinery in extending the acreage of land available for tillage, is but one phase of the revolution wrought by modern inventions. They have not only practically increased the number of food-producing acres, but they have diminished, by three-quarters, the amount of labor necessary to secure the comforts of life. In times not far remote, and even in the memory of men not yet old, it required, in order to get the food and clothing necessary for life and health, that nearly every man, and woman too, should labor, and labor hard for ten, twelve, or fourteen hours a day. Those of us who are middle-aged men can remember how hardly were earned the first few dollars which we could call our own. We can also remember how little money was in circulation, and that the hardest men were glad to labor from before sunrise till after sunset, for ten, twelve, or fourteen dollars per month. And these prices were all the farmers could afford to pay. They were obliged to work themselves as hard as any of their men, in order to feed, and clothe, and school their children, and yet make

the two ends meet. They must rigidly economize to keep out of debt; and the most the farmer could produce, that would bear transportation to market, must go to get money to pay taxes, and such other things as salt, tea, coffee, and sugar, in such quantities as could be afforded. Of this, one-half was consumed in getting the other half to market; so that what now would be considered a meager living was about all that the most thrifty and industrious could get for their incessant toil. But times have changed. The inventor has scotched the old serpent, and labor-saving machinery has lifted the heavy burdens from the sons of toil. The steam engine, the reaper, the thresher, the spinning-jenny, and the thousand modern inventions, have so multiplied the powers of production that not one-third, perhaps not one-fourth, of the manual labor is now required to secure the necessaries and comforts of life that it took forty years ago. Now shall capital get all the benefits of these improvements? Shall the hours of labor be the same as when it took them four times the amount of human toil that it does now to secure the comforts of life? I say, no; labor has a right to share with capital the blessings that the world has derived from the inventor's brains. If the man of toil must now work the same number of hours as formerly to make a bare living, what advantageth it him that Watt, and Whitney, and McCormick, and Howe, and Woodworth, have ever lived? The benefits nearly all go to the rich, whose accumulations would have startled their fathers; and as the iron hands of the steam-engine do the work of human sinews, the competition in the field of labor is made more sharp, and the laborer is left more completely at the mercy of the employer, because of labor-saving machinery.

Now though capital has ever striven to retain all these advantages to itself, nevertheless, some of the conveniences and luxuries unknown to the laboring classes fifty years ago, come now within their reach. The man dependent on his daily toil even now, if he would feed and clothe his family comfortably, and educate his children, must labor hard and make his days long. But there is no necessity for men to labor as they used to for the bare necessities of life. As with the advantages of modern inventions, not more than a third part of the manual labor is required to secure the means of support as formerly; it follows that if men labor now as they did then, and yet get but a bare living, the larger part of their earnings go to swell the gains of the rich. Hence we see colossal fortunes accumulating on every hand, and in their train follow luxury, immorality, and extravagance. The very submission of the many to excessive and unnecessary labor, serves but to pamper the depraved tastes and vices of the few. It is not only the right, but the duty of the laboring classes to refuse to labor as did their

fathers. Eight hours a day, as a rule, will be enough, if two-thirds or one-half can be employed for that number of hours, to produce all that is demanded for the health and comfort of the entire people; and when the laboring classes submit to do more, the excess goes only to the luxuries and hoardings of the rich.

The inequalities of fortune constitute one of the greatest dangers to a republican form of government. They encourage profligacy in the rich, and cause discontent and vice in the poor. Excessive luxury is always the harbinger of dissolution. Hence I regard the eight-hour movement as a healthful and hopeful sign; and though the efforts of some of its advocates to enforce their measures by lawless interference with the liberty of others, is not to be justified nor tolerated, yet the fundamental idea of less hours to the laborer is patriotic and right, and its supporters are justified in endeavoring by all legal and moral means, to make it the rule and usage.

I have thus spoken of the living issues before the country. But what are measures or theories, or even laws, as compared with a high moral standard among the masses of the people? Long experience has demonstrated that no theory of state-craft, no code of laws, no constitutional guarantees, can be made to avail against general ignorance and immorality. Only an intelligent and an honest people can long preserve individual liberty and equal rights. Corruption in high places, if allowed to pass unrebuked, is sure to be followed and imitated by the masses, till such a thing as political morality is the exception, and official honesty unknown. To this general depravity succeeds anarchy, which in turn is always followed by violence and ends in despotism. History, if it teaches nothing else, teaches this; and it would be well if the people of California would now consider their own moral bearings, and ask themselves whether or no those who are the loudest in their outcry against salary grabs and back pay steals are not indulging in the veriest cant and hypocrisy. That the people should be disgusted and indignant at the passage of such Acts by Congress is but natural, and it is a healthful sign that it is so; but are not those who are loudest and fiercest in denouncing all who voted for the back pay and increased salary bill, and President Grant who signed it, quite indifferent to the moral obliquity of their own leader and champion, who worked for and approved a bill giving to himself both back pay and increased salary? Did he not violate the Constitution he had sworn to support by signing a bill that he knew contained an unconstitutional proviso which increased his own salary, and then drawing the money with eager haste?

During the last political canvass, who so loud as our doughty Governor in denouncing President Grant for signing a bill that increased his own pay for his incoming term. Who, too, was so bitter in his oburgations of those Congressmen that voted themselves back pay for



the past, and increased pay for the future? But, alas! the contortions his body, as he gesticulated his indignation, rattled the money in his own pocket that had been obtained by a salary grab and a back-pay steal. Had we a Nast among us to illustrate the beautiful consistency of our Governor, he should represent him with his mouth open, rolling forth indignant scorn of the thieves and grabbers who had soiled their fingers with back pay and Credit Mobilier Stock; his right hand raised and outstretched to give emphasis to his words, while his left was slyly stuffing in his pocket the bill he had just signed, giving himself an additional thousand dollars a year.

But though our Governor abused his trust, and disgraced the State by his action in the California increased salary grab and back pay steal, we, the citizens of California, have one consolation. He did not sell himself so cheaply as did Schuyler Colfax. The late Vice-President received only \$1,200 from that fund, which was distributed where it would do the most good; but do you think our Governor, the head of the purity and reform party in California, would sell himself so cheap as that? No. I scorn the insinuation, and, as a citizen of California, jealous of her good name, I repudiate the idea that her Governor would try to rob the State, unconstitutionally, for the paltry sum of \$1,200. That he has done it for \$4,000 is now known to all, and when we compare the political morality of the East with that of California, we may take comfort to ourselves from the fact that our leading men hold themselves at a higher price for cash than do those beyond the Rocky Mountains, and that as 4,000 is to 1,200, so is California virtue to that of Indiana. The price of our statesmen at Sacramento is more than three times as high as it is at Washington. Let us, then, hear no more about corruption in California politics among the purity and reform leaders.

Now I do not claim to be so much better than other people that I feel it my especial duty to expose their faults and shortcomings, and it is not from any pleasure I take in commenting on the errors of a man holding high position, that I make this allusion to Governor Booth. As Governor, or prospective Senator, the individual Newton Booth concerns me very little. But the, callous, stupid indifference of the people to everything like common honesty in their public servants, does concern me and concerns everybody. The shameless effrontery of people who vaunt their own virtue because they denounce the faults and corruption of their political opponents, while they rally around a man who is guilty in the concrete of all they denounce in the abstract, evinces a state of moral obtuseness and profligacy of a most dangerous and threatening character.

During the late political canvass in this State, the people did

not seem to know or care whether or no their candidates had or affected to have common honesty. The two men in whose interest it seemed to be mainly conducted did not even affect enough honesty to hold them to their pledges. No matters of practical statesmanship were discussed, no question of higher law or natural right; no measures of specific relief from the tyrannizing power of monopolies, but only appeals to secure the election of this man or that man to the United States Senate. And yet, though the friends of one of them, who were working night and day to compass his election by representing that he was not a candidate and not in the canvass, not even in California, no notice was taken of the attempted fraud, as people seemed to think that if he could win by the trick it would be proper and legitimate, and they would console themselves with the miserable saying that all is fair in politics.

The other man for whom that campaign was carried on, also was not a candidate. It was not that his friends had said he was not, and that he was trying to take advantage of their denial. But he had explicitly and publicly said, when running for the governorship, that under no circumstances would he, if elected, be a candidate for another position during his official term. Indeed, he could not honestly and decently accept an election to the Senate, for he would be under contract with the people to serve through his term. It would be dishonest for him to accept, even if elected—dishonest was the word he used, and should we not take the word of a Governor that he would not do an act that he himself had stigmatized as dishonest?

Now the temptation to accept the office of U. S. Senator is very great, especially to a man who has resorted to dark and dishonest ways to obtain his election. Hence, after the shameful duplicity exhibited by both Gorham and Booth when canvassing before the people, and the liberality of Casserly when negotiating for the seat he now holds, I do not look for such Spartan virtue in any one of them as that he should decline it if offered to him. If people will vote for men who can be candidates only at the sacrifice of honor and truth, the inference is, that they prefer men who are destitute of those qualities—men who will break their pledges without scruple, and who, if censured for their violation, can turn to their constituents with the sneering reply that they were elected as pledge-breakers, as the representatives of untruth, the scoffers at honesty, the despisers of virtue and fidelity.

But the fact that now and then a dishonest or unworthy man attains high position, is of little importance if the moral atmosphere is kept pure, and a high standard of integrity is maintained by the masses of the people. So long as the moral sense of the community is kept elevated and pure, no one individual can work serious



harm or danger. But when people grow indifferent whether or no their public servants have even common honesty, so that they represent some party interest or private scheme, then indeed are we drifting on the rocks of destruction. Then must the old ship Republic ere long founder, from inherent rottenness. The degeneracy which begets indifference to official morality, is the sign of national decay ; of a death that has no resurrection.







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